

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) A header and permeate collection means incorporating potted hollow fibre membranes, the header and permeate collection means having,

- a) a solid mass of a potting material having a first face;
- b) a plurality of hollow fibre membranes sealed in the potting material; and,
- c) terminal portions of the hollow fibre membranes adjacent open ends of the membranes protruding from the first face,  
~~characterized in that~~wherein,
- d) the solid mass of potting material extends to and adhesively secures to the inner periphery of a permeate collection means to form a permeate collection zone; and,
- e) the open-ended terminal portions of the hollow fibre membranes protrude into the permeate collection zone.

2. (Currently Amended) The header and permeate collection means of claim 1 wherein the ~~solid mass of potting material extends to and adhesively secures to the inner periphery of~~permeate collection means is a permeate pan; or an end cap ~~or a header enclosure to form the permeate collection zone.~~

3. (Currently Amended) The header and permeate collection means of claim 1 having a cushioning lamina embedding said fibres and coextensively adhered to said potting material.

4. (Currently Amended) The header and permeate collection means of claim 3 wherein said cushioning lamina has a hardness in the range from Shore A 30 to Shore D 45.

5. (New) The header and permeate collection means of claim 1 wherein the permeate collection means further comprises walls enclosing a plenum adjacent to the permeate collection zone into which plenum a gas may be introduced.

6. (New) The header and permeate collection means of claim 5 further comprising an air tube passing through the potting material, the air tube having a first end protruding from a second face of the potting material from which the membranes extend and a second end in communication with the plenum.

7. (New) The header and permeate collection means of claim 6 wherein the potting material extends to and adhesively secures to the air tube.

8. (New) The header and permeate collection means of claim 1 further comprising an air tube, the air tube passing through the potting material, the air tube having a first end protruding from a second face of the potting material from which the membranes extend and a second end in communication with a plenum or manifold into which air may be introduced.

9. (New) The header and permeate collection means of claim 8 wherein the potting material extends to and adhesively secures to the air tube.